



# The West Chester Eleven



## **Second Lieutenant GENE SMEDLEY MCMULLEN**

Gene Smedley McMullen was born on December 13, 1942 to Robert and Frances McMullen in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Gene had a sister. Gene grew up in a military family. Regardless of where his father was stationed; West Chester was their home town. Gene attended high school at the Punahou Academy in Honolulu and graduated in 1958. Gene attended Penn State College. He majored in history, played on the Varsity Football Team under coach Rip Engle and enrolled in the NROTC (Navy Reserve Officers Training Course) preparing to enter the Marine Corps. Gene graduated Penn State in 1965 and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve. Gene played on the 1965 Quantico football team. In December of that year he married Eleanor Madore of Bedford, PA. He was sent to Vietnam in May 1966 as a platoon leader with the Third Battalion of the 12th Marine Artillery Regiment and was a Forward Artillery Observer. Second Lieutenant Gene Smedley McMullen was Killed In Action on July, 16 1966 in Quang Tri Province. He was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery at the end of that month. In May 2002, Gene as well as 3 other athletes from the 1965 Quantico football team who gave their lives in Vietnam were honored. Gene's father served as an officer in the Marine Corps during World War II, Korea and Vietnam.



2LT McMullen  
First To Fall



## **Corporal ERNEST E. ORENDORFF JR.**

Ernest E. Orendorff Jr. was born to Ernest E. and Mary Masterson Orendorff on April 8, 1945 on Meadow Brooke Lane in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Ernest had two sisters and a brother. Ernest attended Saint Agnes Parochial School and graduated from Bishop Shanahan High School (then located in West Chester) where he played on the varsity basketball team. Ernest enlisted in the Marine Corps in February 1964. After basic and advance training, he was assigned to the Third Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division of the Fleet Marine Force at Camp Lejune, North Carolina. In May 1966, Ernest was promoted to the rank of Corporal, was sent to Vietnam. Corporal Ernest E. Orendorff Jr. was Killed In Action on August 3, 1966 near Da Nang in the Quang Nam Province. He was laid to rest in Saint Agnes Cemetery on August 10, 1966. At the time, it was thought that he was the first from West Chester who died in the war. The last soldier from West Chester who died in the war was Specialist 5 Nathaniel Carl Matthews. Orendorff-Matthews Disabled American Veterans Chapter 90 in West Chester was named in their honor.



## **Lance Corporal BLAINE ANTHONY DeBOARD JR.**

Blaine Anthony DeBoard Jr., was born on November 7, 1945 in West Chester, Pennsylvania. The family lived in Grove, a small community just north of West Chester. Blaine was an only child. Blaine graduated in 1963 from West Chester Joint Senior High School. Blaine joined the Marine Corps October 13, 1965. After basic and advanced training, he was then assigned to the Headquarters and Supply Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division. Blaine's unit was shipped overseas to Vietnam in March, 1966. His unit operated in the Quang Tri area of central Vietnam. The area saw some of the fiercest combat in 1966. On December 28th, Blaine was wounded while defending his base. Lance Corporal Blaine Anthony DeBoard Jr. Died Of Wounds on December 29, 1966. Blaine's father served in the Army during World War II and in the European Theater.



## **Specialist 4 DAVID C. STANLEY**

David Carl Stanley was born to George and Pauline Stanley on July 26, 1945 in Ashe County, North Carolina. He had two sisters and four brothers. The family moved to the West Chester area when David was young. He attended West Chester Joint Senior High School. David was drafted during the summer of 1966 and went into the army. After basic and advanced training, David received orders to report to Vietnam for assignment to a combat unit in March 1967. He was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division, which David was further assigned to Company "B", 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment headquartered at Lai Khe, about 30 miles north of Saigon on Hwy 13. On July 24, 1967, David was promoted to Specialist Fourth Class (SP4). He had already received his Combat Infantryman's Badge for direct combat action against enemy forces while conducting search and destroy missions in May, 1967 during Operation Manhattan. On September 14, 1967, Specialist 4 David C. Stanley was Killed In Action. He was laid to rest in his family's cemetery plot in Ashe County, NC.



## Major LOUIS FULDA GUILLERMIN

Louis Fulda Guillermin was born on January 6, 1943 to Mr. and Mrs. Wister P. Guillermin who lived in West Chester. Louis attended the West Chester Joint Senior High School graduating in 1960. Louis was in the school's marching band and on the Golf team. After graduation from high school, Louis attended West Chester University. Louis joined the Air Force as an Aviation Cadet. He received his pilots training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX. Louis received further training in radar and celestial navigation instruction at Connally Air Force Base in Texas. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and awarded his silver wings in April 1964. He was sent to Vietnam for a tour of duty arriving April 30, 1968. He flew counter insurgency missions in an A-26A aircraft, converted from a World War II B-26 Invader. Eleven months before his death at age of 25, Guillermin married his sweetheart, Donna. On April 28, 1968, Major Louis Fulda Guillermin was listed Missing In Action on his last mission over Savannakhet Province, Laos. The crash site was located on May 28, 2013. Louis rose through the ranks to major until his remains were a DNA match to his five surviving cousins. On October 5, 2013, Major Louis Fulda Guillermin was laid to rest beside his parents in Glenwood Cemetery in Broomall, Pennsylvania. Major Louis F. Guillermin Vietnam Veterans Chapter 436 in Phoenixville was named in his honor.



## Lance Corporal DWIGHT DAWSON JOHNSON

Dwight Dawson Johnson was born on January 18, 1948 in Harnett County, North Carolina. The family moved to Baltimore in 1953, then to Denver, Colorado in 1960. They returned east to Glen Mills, Pennsylvania in 1964. A Dwight was a talented artist in media such as pastels, charcoal and oils. His art was published in school publications, and he sold a number of his works. After graduating from West Chester Joint Senior High School, Dwight entered the Marine Corps in 1967. After basic and advanced training, Dwight was sent to Vietnam and served with Mike Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division in Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam, near the Laotian border. The Marines of 3/9 had survived the onslaught of the infamous TET offensive in January, and efforts were underway to clear the border area of any remaining enemy elements. Operation KENTUCKY was launched across the demilitarized zone – one that would inflict heavy casualties on both sides. Lance Corporal Dwight Johnson was Killed In Action on May 4, 1968. A memorial service was held at Mill Creek Christian Church, Newton Grove, North Carolina on Sunday May 19th where he was buried with military honors. His close friend Robert J. Brown provided military escort. Dwight and Robert were high school friends and joined the Marines together. Robert was then stationed in San Diego.



## Specialist 5 PAUL L. COSGRIFF

Paul L. Cosgriff was born on September 4, 1948 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. He lived in West Chester, Pennsylvania for most of his life. Paul was a 1967 graduate of Bishop Shannahan High School, where he played football for two years. He was a member of SS. Simon and Jude Church. Paul entered the Army in August, 1967. After basic and advanced training, Paul was sent to Vietnam in April, 1968. While stationed at Phu Loi, South Vietnam, he was promoted to Specialist 5 in August, 1968. He served as a crew chief for combat helicopters. Paul was previously awarded the Army Commendation Medal in June, 1968 when he single-handedly put out a fire on board a helicopter. On October 21, 1968, Specialist 5 Cosgriff was Killed In Action when the helicopter he was onboard was downed by enemy fire during combat operations. He was only 20 years old. A Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated on November 2, 1968 at the SS. Simon and Jude Church. Interment with military honors was in St. Agnes Cemetery.



## Private First Class THOMAS MICHAEL MARCHAND

Thomas Michael Marchand was born on November 19, 1947 in Providence, Rhode Island. His parents later moved to West Chester, Pennsylvania. Thomas was one of six children. Thomas graduated from Bishop Shanahan High School in 1965. Thomas attended both West Chester State College, and the University of Delaware. After graduation, he obtained employment with the US Postal Service at the Paoli Post Office. Thomas was drafted into the Army in October, 1968. After basic training, he was sent to Vietnam in May, 1969, serving with the Army's Air Cavalry Division. PFC Thomas M. Marchand was Killed In Action on June 12, 1969. His funeral was held on July 24, 1969 and his High Mass was celebrated at St. Agnes Church, followed by interment at the St. Agnes Cemetery.





## Lance Corporal ELDIN G. BERGER JR.



Eldin G. Berger was born on August 20, 1949 to Edwin and Elizabeth Murray Berger. Eldin was nicknamed "Jacky". Eldin attended Henderson High School. He was a volunteer at West Chester's Fame Fire Company and also worked for a brief period at Lasko Metal Products Co., in West Chester. Eldin entered the Marine Corps and after basic and advanced training, he was sent to Vietnam on January 28, 1969. His parents recall his devotion to duty and loyalty to the Marine Corps which he spoke often in his letters and calls home. "He kept telling us not to worry," Mrs. Berger said. Corporal Berger called them from Bangkok, Thailand, where he spent a few days on R and R (rest and relaxation) leave. In a letter to his brother, he said he was sorry he wouldn't be home for Christmas this year, but certainly he would be home for Easter. 20 year old Eldin was wounded on October 5, 1969 on patrol in South Vietnam. At this time, Lance Corporal Berger served as a machine-gunner with the First Marine division. He died shortly thereafter on October 9, 1969. He had less than three months to serve in the war zone.



## Second Lieutenant ROBERT W. DONAHUE JR.



Robert W. Donahue Jr. was born in Wilmington, Delaware, but later moved with his family to West Chester, Pennsylvania. He had five sisters and a brother. Robert was a member of St. Agnes Church, West Chester. Robert graduated from Archmere Academy and then attended Purdue University, where he was a Phi Kappa Tau fraternity member. Robert was inducted into the Army in May, 1968. He attended officers candidate school at Fort Benning, Ga. and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He arrived in South Vietnam on November 13, 1968 and was assigned to a base station about 11 miles from the Cambodian border. He was attached to the 1st Air Cavalry Division. Second Lieutenant Robert W. Donahue Jr. was killed in action on November 28, 1969 while on patrol in the Tay Ninh area of South Vietnam.



## Specialist 5 NATHANIAL CARL MATTHEWS



Spec5 Matthews  
Last To Fall

Nathaniel Carl Matthews was born on September 20, 1949. His family lived on Chestnut Street in West Chester. He was one of six children. Nathaniel attended Henderson High School and played on the varsity soccer team. During his senior year, the team won the Southern Chester County Championship for the 7th straight year. He graduated in 1967, and then attended Lincoln University for two years. Nathaniel Matthews enlisted in the Army entering service on July 18, 1969. After basic and advanced training he was sent to Vietnam, commencing his tour on February 1, 1970. He served with troop B, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division. Nathaniel Matthews was Killed-In-Action by small arms fire on August 10, 1971, in the Quang Tri province in the northern area of the South Vietnam. Funeral services were held at the Bethel AME Church in West Chester on August 20th. Services were also held by Headquarters Company, USA, Indiantown Gap, Military Reservation, Anville. Specialist 5 Nathaniel Carl Matthews was laid to rest in Rolling Green Cemetery in East Goshen Township, Pennsylvania. Specialist 5 Nathaniel Carl Matthews was the last soldier from West Chester who died in the war. At the time, it was thought that Corporal Ernest E. Orendorff Jr. was the first from West Chester who died in the war. Orendorff-Matthews Disabled American Veterans Chapter 90 in West Chester was named in their honor.



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For additional information about the West Chester Eleven and other fallen heroes from Chester County, Pennsylvania, visit:

Chester County Hall of Heroes Web Site

[www.chescoheroes.org](http://www.chescoheroes.org)

